

# Reading German Language Revision Lists

Latvia “How to” Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

November 2020

## GOAL

This guide will teach you how to read a Russian Empire revision list written in German.

## INTRODUCTION

The Russian Empire used a head/individual tax system known as the “soul” tax. In order to identify taxpayers, revision lists, or enumerations of the taxable population, were created. Revision lists were not introduced in Latvia until the fourth revision or enumeration which was carried out between 1781 and 1787.

Revision lists from Latvia may have been written in either German, Russian, Latvian or any combination of the above – for example, a document may have Russian column headings, but the information in the body of the document could be written in German or even Latvian. This “How to” guide will focus on how to read German language revision lists. For help with revision lists in other languages, see the [Latvia Taxation Records](#) page on the FamilySearch Wiki.

You may want to consult the following “How to” Guides before continuing:

- [Raduraksti: Online Latvian Revision Lists](#)

Latvian revision lists are also available through FamilySearch. Click [here](#) to access them. Note that the revision lists available through *Raduraksti* may be easier to navigate. *Raduraksti* is free but requires registration.

## HOW TO

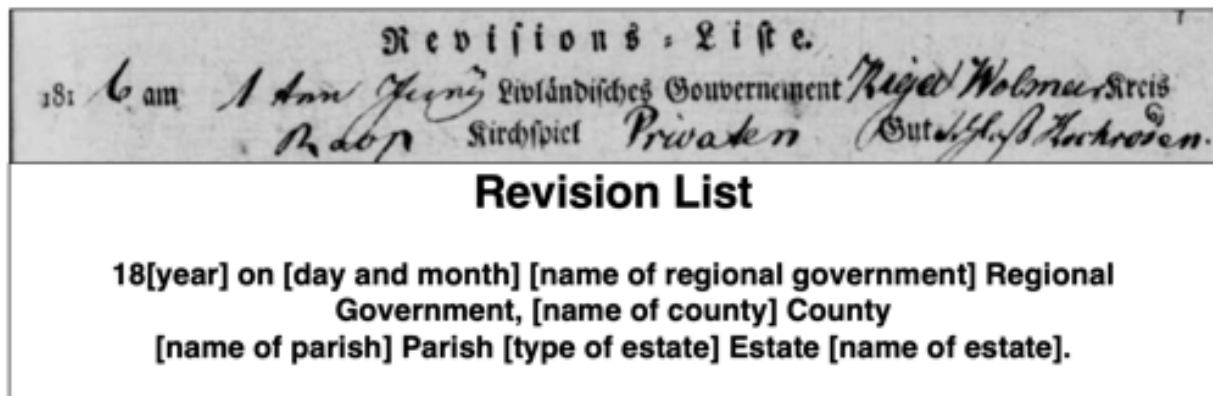
In order to read revision list records written in German, you will need to develop some basic German paleography skills. You may want to consult the following resources before continuing:

- [German Paleography Seminar Series Learning Center Course](#)
- [German Genealogical Word List](#)
- [German Handwriting FamilySearch Wiki](#)

## STEP1: IDENTIFY THE LOCATION

In order to identify your ancestor in a revision list, you must first locate the revision list records for their town.

- Revision list records for a specific locality usually have a cover page stating the location or a heading at the top of each page that specifies the date and important political jurisdictions.
- Revision lists generally begin with the largest level of jurisdiction down to the smallest, ie. regional government, county, parish, estate as shown in the example below.



## STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE REVISION NUMBER TO DETERMINE COLUMN HEADINGS

There were ten revisions, or enumerations taken in the Russian Empire, but only seven revisions are available for Latvian research. The first, second, and third revisions did not include Latvia. Each revision typically used its own unique form, so German language revision list forms can take on a variety of appearances depending upon the year of the revision. Use the date recorded on your revision list record and the table below to locate the revision number and the page in this "How to" Guide where you can find a description of the column headings to help you understand the information you can expect to find in each column.

Revision Number	Years Covered	Page Number in this Guide
Fourth	1781-1787	3
Fifth	1794-1808	3
Sixth	1811 (incomplete)	4
Seventh	1815-1825	4-5
Eighth	1833-1835	5
Ninth	1850	6
Tenth	1857-1859	6
Transfer Lists	Various	6-7

Take note of the following:

- Some German language revision lists were recorded on a pre-printed form, while others used a handwritten column format. The examples included below are from pre-printed forms, but handwritten forms will follow the same general format.
- The fourth-seventh revisions often used forms with column headings in German, while the eighth-tenth revisions commonly used forms with column headings in Russian, with text in the body of the record in either German or Russian. If you encounter records written in Russian, see the [Latvia Taxation Records](#) page on the FamilySearch Wiki.

#### Fourth Revision (1781-1782)

	Männlichen Ge Jahre und	Weiblichen schlechts das Alter.
[Names]	Age of Males	Age of Females

#### Fifth Revision (1794-1808)

Stand und Namen der Leute des männlichen und weiblichen Geschlechtes.	Männliche.			Weibliche.		
	Was der letzten Revision sind aus Kopieuren ange- schrieben.	Was dierien sind nach der Revision bis zu dieser Zeit durch verchiede- dene Zufälle bisher abge- gangen.	Jetzt mit den eingekommen- nen und den neu Ge- borenen mäch- tig vorhanden	Was der ica- ten Revision sind eingeschrei- ben.	Was dierien sind nach der Revision bis zu dieser Zeit durch verchiede- dene Zufälle bisher abge- gangen.	Jetzt mit den eingekommen- nen und den neu Ge- borenen mäch- tig vorhanden
	Alter.		Alter.	Alter.		Alter.
	Males			Females		
The standing and names of males and females	What was recorded in the previous revision	Those now gone since the previous revision and for what reason	Current, new arrivals, and new births	What was recorded in the previous revision	Those now gone since the previous revision and for what reason	Current, new arrivals, and new births
	Age		Age	Age		Age

### Sixth Revision (1811 – Incomplete)

The sixth revision only enumerated males. It was incomplete due to the Napoleonic Wars.

	Alter.		
	Nach der letzten Revision waren.	Von dieser Zahl sind abgegangen.	Gegenwärtig sind mit den Hinzugekommenen und nachher Gebornen vorhanden.
[Names]	Age		
	In the previous revision	Those who have departed	Current, new arrivals, and new births

### Seventh Revision (1815-1825)

Enumerated males were recorded on the left-hand side of the page. The head of household was recorded first, followed by any other male members of the household. An individual's ages at the current and previous revisions was recorded. Female members of the household were recorded on the right side of the page. The age of women in the previous revision was not recorded.

#### Left Side (Males)

Familien. No.	Männliches Geschlecht.	Bei der letzten Revision befin- den sich und sind nach der- selben Hinge- kommen.	Hieron sind abgegangen.	Gegen- wärtig vorhan- den.
		Alter.	Wann namentlich.	Alter.
Family	Male	How old according to the previous revision and whether they arrived since then.	Which of these are now gone [moved or died]	Current Age
No.		Age [at previous revision]	When exactly [moved or died]	Age [at current revision]

### Right Side (Females)

Fam. ilien.	Weibliches Geschlecht.	In temporeller Abwesenheit.	Gegen- wärtig vorhan- den.
No.		Von welcher Zeit ab.	Alter.
Family	Female	Whether temporarily absent [since the previous revision]	Current Age
No.		When exactly [moved or died]	Age

### Eighth Revision (1833-1835)

#### Left Side (Males)

Fami- lien.	Männlichen Geschlecht.	Bei der letzten Revision war im Bestande, und nach derselben sind hinzuge- kommen.	Hiervon abgegangen.	Gegen- wärtig vorhan- den.
Nummer der Familie.	Dauer - Gemeindeglieder.	Jahre.	Wann namentlich.	Jahre.
Family	Males	Previous Revision	Those who have departed	Current Revision
No.	[Social Standing]	Age	When Exactly	Age

### Right Side (Females)

Fami- lien.	Weiblichen Geschlecht.	In temporärer Abwesenheit.	Jetzt gegen- wärtig.
Nummer der Familie.	Wäuerinnen.	Von welcher Zeit ab.	Jahre.
Family	Females	Whether absent [since the previous revision]	Current Revision
No.	[Social Standing]	When Absent	Age

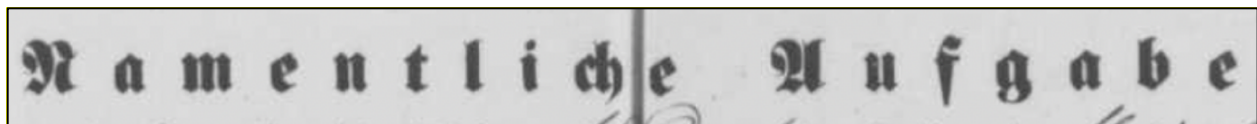
## Ninth Revision (1850) Tenth Revision (1857-1859)

The ninth through tenth revision enumeration forms generally used a pre-printed form with column headings in Russian. For help reading Russian language revision list records, see the [Latvia Taxation Records](#) page on the FamilySearch Wiki.

Although the column headings are in Russian, you may come across handwritten German column headings, or information in the document written in German. These handwritten column headings can take on a variety of different appearances but will generally follow a format similar to any one of the previous revisions mentioned above.

### Transfer Lists

Transfer lists kept track of those who moved in/out in between revision lists. You will find these records grouped with revision list records. Generally, a person will have a transfer list record in both the location they moved from and the place they moved to. The examples below are from the 1850s. For more information about transfer revision lists, see the article "Soul Revision Transfer Lists" found at [luse-research.com/post/soul-revision-transfer-lists](http://luse-research.com/post/soul-revision-transfer-lists).



### Left Side (Males)

N a m e				N a m e der überzuführenden Individuen männlichen und weiblichen Gefchlechts.	Alter, mit welchem diefelben in den Föllen v. 1850 verzeichnet ftehen.	
des Kreifes,	des Kirchfpieles- Gerichts-Bezirks,	des Kirchfpieles,	des Gutes oder des Päfterats,		männ- lichen	weib- lichen
bei welchem der Uebertretende angefehrieben werden foll.					Gefchlecht.	
Name				Names of the relocated males and females	Age in previous revision	
Of the County	Of the Parish's Court-District	Of the Church Parish	Of the Estate or Pastorate		M	F
Of the current place of residence					Sex	







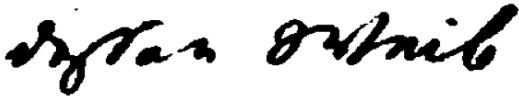




## Right Side (Females)

N a m e				Wo dieselben in der Vöhr von 1850 verzeichnet haben.		M o n a t u n d D a t u m	
des Kreises,	des Kirchspiels-Gerichts-Bezirks,	des Kirchspiels,	des Gutes oder des Pastorats,	Gefährdet-N.	Familien-N.	der über die zu bewerkstelligende Aufnahme von der künftigen Gemeinde ausgetheilten Urtheile.	
bei welchem der Ueberschreibende angeschrieben gewesen.							
Name				Where they are listed in the previous revision		Month and date when the civil parish issued a certificate	
Of the County	Of the Parish's Court-District	Of the Parish	Of the Estate or Pastorate	Farm No.	Family no.		
Of the Past Place of Residence							

### STEP 3: IDENTIFY NAMES AND RELATIONSHIPS

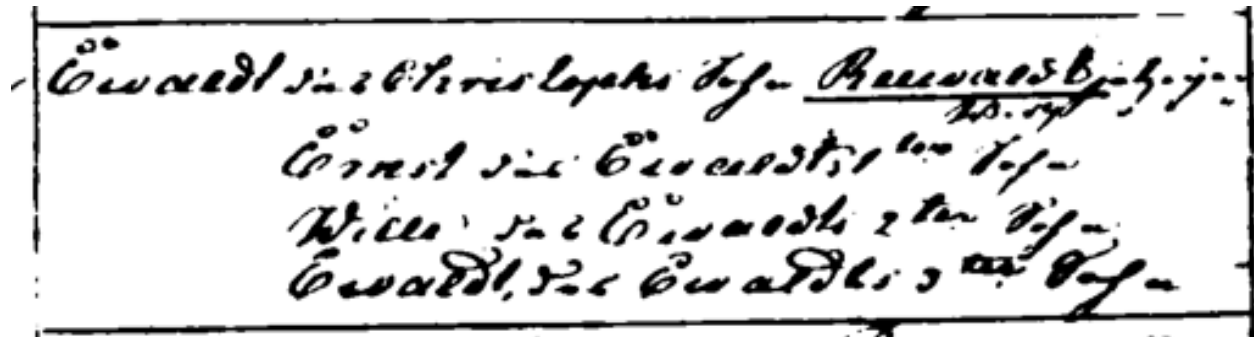
The head of the household (hereon referred to as HOH) was typically listed first, followed by other members of the household and their relationship to the HOH. Below are examples of common relationship vocabulary.

Handwritten Example	German Word and English Translation	Description
	<i>dessen Söhne</i> (his sons)	Followed by the names of the HOH's sons. In some cases, the sons might be numbered. You may also see just <i>Söhne</i> (sons).
	<i>dessen Sohn</i> (his son)	Followed by the name of the HOH's son. You may see it written without <i>dessen</i> as shown in the example to the left.
	S. (common abbreviation for son or sons)	Followed by name of the HOH's son(s).

Handwritten Example	German Word and English Translation	Description
	<i>dessen Bruder</i> (his brother)	Followed by the name of the HOH's brother. You may see it written without <i>dessen</i> as shown in the example to the left. If a man had more than one brother, you will see <i>Brüder</i> written.
	<i>dessen Weib</i> (his wife)	Followed by the name of the HOH's wife. You may see it written as just <i>Weib</i> (wife). <i>Frau</i> may also be used.
	<i>dessen Wittwe</i> (his wife)	Followed by the name of the HOH's widow. You may see it written as just <i>Wittwe</i> (widow).
	<i>dessen Töchter</i> (his daughters)	Followed by the names of the HOH's daughters. You may see it written without <i>dessen</i> as shown in the example to the left.
	<i>dessen Tochter</i> (his daughter)	Followed by the name of the HOH's daughter. You may also see just <i>Tochter</i> (daughter).
	<i>Tocht./Töcht.</i> (common abbreviation for daughter(s))	Followed by the name of the HOH's daughter(s).



It is also common to find the HOH listed as: *[HOH], son of [HOH's father]*, even if the HOH's father is no longer alive or residing in the household, as shown in the example below:



HOH: Ewaldt, des Christophs Sohn (Ewaldt, Christoph's son)

Note that the names of the sons are recorded as: *[name of son], [HOH's] son*. You may also see this pattern used with other relationships (daughters, wife, siblings, etc.).




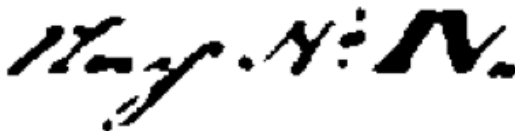
If grandchildren lived with the HOH, the revision list will not typically read "his grandchildren."

Instead, grandchildren will be listed as sons of his sons, and slightly indented and/or numbered as shown in the example to the right.

Simon Jwan 1<sup>er</sup> Sohn Apphe  
 2<sup>er</sup> Sohn Peter  
 3<sup>er</sup> Sohn Gust  
 4<sup>er</sup> Sohn Fritz  
 5<sup>er</sup> Sohn Karl

#### STEP 4: IDENTIFY AGES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The columns that record the age in current and/or previous revisions often include more than just ages. They may indicate a year that someone died, or a year that they were born. Other columns may include additional information. On the next page you will find examples of common vocabulary found in these columns.

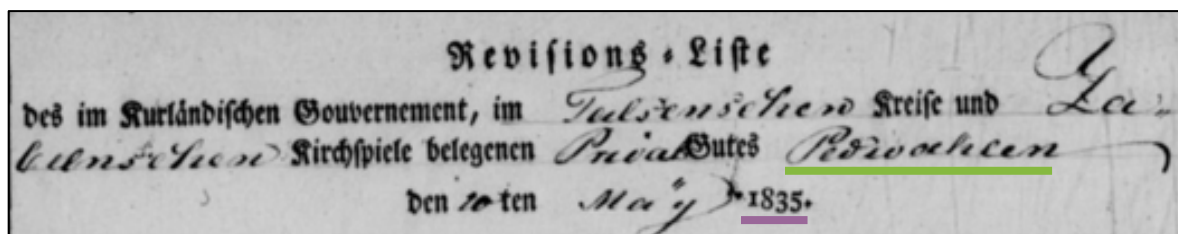
Handwritten Example	German Word and English Translation	Description
	<i>gestorben</i> (died)	Commonly found in the current age column. Often followed by the year of death.
	<i>Gest.</i> (common abbreviation for death)	Commonly found in the current age column. Often followed by the year of death.
	<i>ungeboren</i> (unborn)	Commonly found in the age at previous revision column, indicating the child was not born at the time of the previous revision. You may also see <i>neugeboren</i> used.
	<i>Nach no.</i> (to)	Commonly found in the whether gone or moved column if an individual moved to a different household or town between revisions. Will often list the household number or the name of the town.

## PRACTICE

Practice your new German revision list reading skills by examining household 41 of [this revision list record](#) found on *Raduraksti*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To find this record, go to <https://www.raduraksti.arhivi.lv/> and sign in. Click on **Dvēseļu revīzijas** and then **Lauku teritorijas**. Next scroll down and click on **Engelju (Engelzeem) privātmuiža**, then select **Engelju (Engelzeem) muižas 1797., g. revīzija**. Navigate to image 117 of 143.

## STEP1: IDENTIFY THE LOCATION



In this revision list, the location is Pedwahlen, as underlined in green.

## STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE REVISION NUMBER TO DETERMINE COLUMN HEADINGS

As underlined in purple above, the revision year was 1835. Using the table found on page two of this “How to” Guide, we can see that this document falls into the eighth revision. The eighth revision column headings can be found on page five.

## STEP 3: IDENTIFY NAMES AND RELATIONSHIPS

In the documents below, **relationships** are underlined in red while the name of the **HOH** is in blue. The **surname** is underlined in purple and **all other names** are underlined in yellow. A translation of the names and relationships found is listed below the document.

### Left Side (Males)

No.	Males	Previous Revision Age	Those who have departed	Current Age
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44.	Ernst des Willes Sohn Ahbelith 2 <sup>ter</sup> Sohn	24	"	42
	Carl des Ernsts 1 <sup>ter</sup> Sohn	11	"	17
	Ewaldt des Ernsts 2 <sup>ter</sup> Sohn	5	"	3

Ernst des Willes Sohn Ahbelith (Ernst, son of Wille Ahbelith)

Carl des Ernsts 1<sup>ter</sup> Sohn (Carl, Ernst's 1<sup>st</sup> son)

Ewaldt des Ernsts 2<sup>ter</sup> Sohn (Ewaldt, Ernst's 2<sup>nd</sup> son)

### Right Side (Females)

No.	Females	Whether absent	Current Age
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46.	Juhle Ahbelith des Ernsts Frau Ewe deren 1 <sup>ter</sup> Tochter	.	41. 18.
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Juhle Ahbelith des Ernsts Frau (Juhle Ahbelith, Ernst's wife)  
Ewe deren 1<sup>ter</sup> Tochter (Ewe, their first daughter)

### STEP 4: IDENTIFY AGES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Take a look at the images under step three. The third column on the left-hand side of the page represents the age at previous revision. At the time of the previous revision, the HOH, Ernst, was 24. Carl, the first son is listed as *neugeboren* (underlined in green) or a new birth since the time of the previous revision. The final son, Ewaldt, has a ditto mark in the third column, meaning that like his brother he was born since the time of the last revision. The next column shows those who have departed (moved or died). In this example, the column is blank. The final column lists the age at the current revision. Ernst is 42, Carl is 17 and Ewaldt is 3.

Now look at the right-hand side of the page. The third column lists whether they were absent since the previous revision. In this case, the column is blank. The final column records the age at the current revision. Juhle was 41 while Ewe was 18.

### ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this "How to" Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you've mastered the Guide! Click [here](#) to try out the Activity.

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